



Letter from the Editors: The Coming Anarchist Consensus, Part 1:

This past October, the fun and informative YouTube channel “Vsauce” uploaded a video entitled “Our Narrow Slice,” in which the host Michael Stevens points out that “compared to what human life has mainly been like here on earth, our current societies are weird.” What he means is that modern industrial societies represent a very “narrow slice” of the more than a quarter million years that our species has occupied this planet. The bulk of this human “history” has been a meager hunter-gatherer existence, marked by total harmony with the natural environment but also by a concomitant lack of the modern medicine, sanitation, and other amenities that save countless lives today (at least in so-called “first-world countries”; 30,000 children still die everyday in the “third world” from easily-preventable illnesses like diarrhea—but we’re getting ahead of ourselves). To illustrate this point, Stevens fills most of the last two and a half minutes of the episode with a montage representing the grindingly-slow history of human societal evolution, all set to a somewhat-

ominous electronic score. Each second represents a millennium, and most seconds show little, if any, change; we see people bundled in animal skins, a man with a ceremonial bone pierced through his septum, people carrying water, people with stone tools huddled around a campfire. The last ten seconds flash through “civilization”—wheel-drawn carts, hieroglyphs, Stonehenge—and at the very end an almost-imperceptible flash of the Eiffel Tower and a ComSat signifies our time, Modernity.

The video strikingly illustrates a crucial point often made in the pages of this publication: namely that competitive capitalist markets, authoritarian and hierarchical states, and all the other forms of managerial verticalism and systematized oppression so common today are not inevitable or necessary ways for people to organize themselves. In fact, they are a very very recent historical development, and only one way to organize society out of an almost infinite spectrum of possibilities (as David Graeber

likes to remind us, we can find examples of almost any form of human organization if we’re willing to look far enough away in time and space).

Furthermore, they (capitalism, statism, hierarchy) are not particularly desirable. As regards capitalism, perhaps David Schweickart puts it best when he urges us to “admit that we cannot get beyond capitalism at this moment not because there exists no viable, desirable ‘beyond’ but because those who most profit from the present order are too powerful. Simply that. In the face of such power, one may decide to cultivate one’s garden, or to work to ameliorate the harsher aspects of ‘actually existing capitalism,’ or to struggle for a radical transformation. A case might be made for any of these as an honorable option. What cannot be maintained... is that ‘you need capitalism to ensure a reliable supply of goods and services, and to ensure that

Continued on P11

Inside this issue:

Marissa Alexander Case Updates	3
Community Rallies in Response to City Council	4
“Consent” by Ariel Zitny	5
Free Nestora Salgado	6
“Statement” by Jackson Mac Low	8
Decolonization and Liberation	9
That is not ‘Hello’ and you know it.	9
Black Flag’s Contest	12

Anarchism and the Advent of Paris Dada

Since this issue includes many art submissions, we thought it appropriate to include this excerpt from Theresa Papanikolas's *Anarchism and the Advent of Paris Dada* (2010, Ashgate). Papanikolas argues that the radical “art” movement Dada took on a distinctly anarchist character in Paris from 1914-1924. In the following selection, she briefly reviews the history of anarchism in France leading up to these years, and in doing so gives a whirlwind history of European anarchist thought up to that point—a history important to all anarchists. --Black Flag editor.

From *Anarchism and the Advent of Paris Dada* by Theresa Papanikolas

In contrast to socialism and communism—both of which preserved the state even as they granted the labor base varying degrees of governmental control—anarchism was the only left-wing philosophy to call for the elimination of all statist structures in favor of the complete sovereignty of the individual. Contained in this broad definition, however, are several diverse—and often conflicting—ideological categories. These include federalism, anarcho-syndicalism, and anarcho-communism, as well as terrorism, illegalism, and anarcho-individualism.

Continued on P2

Federalism was theorized in the mid-nineteenth century by the ardent populist and unconditional supporter of revolutions Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. Like his socialist contemporary Karl Marx, and like his democratic forerunner Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Proudhon developed a political philosophy based on abolishing the inequities associated with monarchies and guaranteeing equality for all citizens. In contrast to his socialist and democratic counterparts, however, Proudhon believed that total individual autonomy could only result from the wholesale elimination of the state; in its place, he proposed “a form of government” based on “anarchy” in which statist structures would give way to small, autonomous federations, and voluntary, mutual agreements would replace legislative systems.

Although Proudhon assumed that such a mutualist society would be the direct result of a revolutionary “force against which no power, divine or human, can prevail,” the formation of a real revolutionary theory of anarchism was left to his younger contemporary, Michael Bakunin. Bakunin believed that “the passion to destroy [was] a creative passion,” and he was convinced that each individual possessed the instinct and the desire for freedom; thus, he modified Proudhon’s federalism and views on the inevitability of revolution to develop an anarchist theory that emphasized the destructive anger of revolutionary minds. He envisioned an insurgent collective whose force would liberate individuals by shattering social constraints, and, in brief collaboration with the felonious Sergei Nechaev, he extended this revolutionary ideal of wholesale societal assault into the terrorist concept of “propaganda by the deed.” Indeed, for Bakunin and Nechaev, isolated acts of violence could inspire revolutionary events, and their message gave impetus to numerous *fin-de-siècle* assassins who aimed their bombs and bullets at such prominent political and economic leaders as the Russian Czar Alexander II and the American industrialist Henry Clay Frick.

While not all anarchists employed such violent tactics, most advocated extreme forms of propaganda, whether by “deed” or by “creed”; thus, implicit in all anarchism was the idea that political, creative, and moral assaults on dominant value systems could foster individual liberation and catalyze revolution. The nature of these anarchist assaults, however, was as varied as the movement itself. Thus, in 1895, when the French syndicalist Fernand Pelloutier called for general strikes as a way of generating economic upheaval and bringing about labor reform, he adapted anarchist revolutionary theory to the aims of the Confédération Générale de Travail (CGT). And in 1902, when Peter Kropotkin called on “poets, painters, sculptors, musicians ... to ... show the people how hideous is their actual life,” he marshaled intellectuals as a revolutionary force.

Kropotkin was a scion of Russian nobility, and a geographer in his youth, but he is best known for his theory of anarcho-communism, or, as he termed it, “Mutual Aid.” That theory originated in Kropotkin’s simultaneous observation of the inequities that existed between the Russian nobility and lower classes and his reinterpretation of Darwin’s theories to emphasize the “natural law of cooperation” within animal groups. Convinced that human beings, like animals, could coexist equitably, Kropotkin studied Proudhon’s mutualist theories, but he found them limited in their conditional promise of social benefits as a function of labor contracts and completed tasks. As an alternative, Kropotkin proposed a communist theory of anarchism in which labor would follow ability and benefits would cater to need, and he envisioned a collective that would guarantee each individual the right and the opportunity to subsist. Kropotkin’s theory of mutual aid exerted a particularly profound influence on the anarchist movement in France, and it was perpetuated there by such leading anarchist theorists as Elie Réclus, Elisée Réclus, and Sébastien Faure.

Although these anarchists—along with Proudhon and Bakunin—based their anarchism on individualism, they ultimately defined human interactions in terms of voluntary collective alliances, and here anarcho-communism diverged radically from anarcho-individualism. Anarcho-individualism was based on the theories of the German philosopher Max Stirner, whose main treatise *The Ego and His Own* (1848) offered the anti-communist view that all forms of collectivity served only to submit the wishes of the individual to the requirements of the common good; indeed, he maintained, the individual was threatened by even the most equitable of milieus. Instead, Stirner viewed society purely in terms of the egoist self, and he proposed a “union of Egoists” loosely associated out of mutual respect for each others’ “ownness” as an alternative to the collectivist model of individuals freely associating in common pursuit of liberty.

In prewar France, Stirner’s radical egoism inspired an anarcho-individualist movement, which was later transformed under the influence of Friedrich Nietzsche’s critique of ideological institutions and homogenous “herds” in the name of individual “will to power.” Among the main French anarchoindividualist theorists were the Stirnerites Emile Armand (a frequent contributor to the reviews *L’Anarchie* [1905–14] and *L’En dehors* [1922–39] who rejected the notion of a revolutionary utopia in favor of a philosophy based on the revolutionization of the here and now)



Updates on the Marissa Alexander Case



despite the fact that Florida's self-defense law includes the right to "Stand Your Ground," she was arrested by Jacksonville police and charged with aggravated assault. After 12 minutes of deliberation, a jury of 6 people convicted Ms. Alexander of three counts of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon with no intent to harm. Her sentence was set at 20 years in part due to the state's mandatory minimum sentencing laws. Marissa Alexander successfully appealed the trial, overturning the guilty verdict on 9/26/13. She was released on bond on 11/27/13 and is now under house arrest. While under house arrest, she must pay \$105 every week for the use of an ankle monitor, and \$500 every other week for the bond cost. Her new trial is scheduled to begin on 3/31/14.

On November 27th, 2013, Marissa Alexander was released from jail (put under house arrest) in order to await her re-trial. The following updates, adapted from materials provided by the Free Marissa Now campaign (<http://www.freemarissanow.org/>), explain next steps and how to get involved. --Black Flag Editor.

About Marissa Alexander: Marissa Alexander is a proud African American mother of three, and a loving daughter and sister. She has earned an MBA, she's a woman of faith, and she's a survivor of domestic violence. In 2012, Ms. Alexander was sentenced to twenty years in the Florida criminal correctional system for defending herself from her abusive estranged husband. Nine days after giving birth to a premature child, she fired a single warning shot upwards into a wall to halt her abusive partner during a life-threatening beating.

About Rico Gray: Ms. Alexander's estranged husband, Rico Gray, has been arrested for domestic violence twice and previously landed Ms. Alexander in the hospital after beating her. Gray admitted in a sworn statement that he was the aggressor, he threatened her life, and he was so enraged that he did not know what he would do. Gray also described his beatings of other women with whom he was involved.

Marissa Alexander's incarceration: Despite the fact that Marissa Alexander caused no injuries and has no previous criminal record, and

What You Can Do: You can donate to Marissa's Legal Defense fund at <http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/justice-for-marissa-a-fundraiser-for-freedom> or mail a check to:

Global Alliance, Inc.
For: The Marissa Alexander Legal Defense Fund
P.O. Box 290956
Columbia, SC 29229

Even better, organize a community fundraiser to connect with other Marissa supporters and bring more people into the movement. You can organize community potlucks, open mics, local concerts, raffles, talent shows, holiday parties... Fundraising is a huge part of movement building!

You can also send Marissa a card or letter of solidarity:

Marissa Alexander, P. O. Box 2387, Jacksonville, FL 32257

Finally, you can organize your own informational event, protest, banner drop, or whatever—diversity of tactics is better than scarcity of tactics. If you organize something in the LA area, contact the Free Association of Anarchists (F@@), so we can show up and support. Or ask us about what we're doing to support Marissa: faacollective@gmail.com or faacollective@riseup.net.



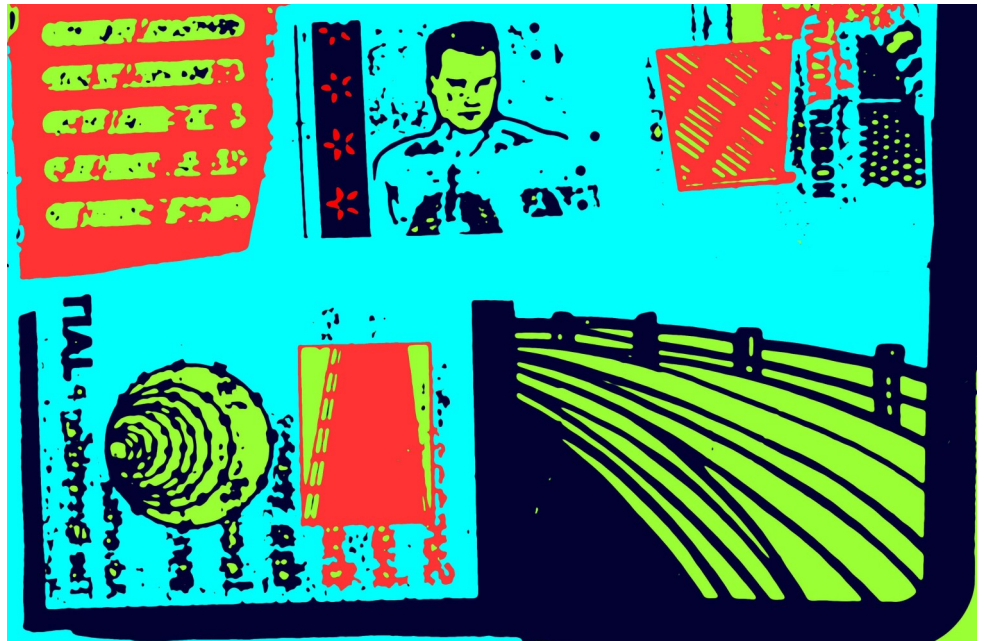
Anarchism and the Advent of Paris Dada continued....

and Pierre Chardon (an extreme anti-militarist who, with Armand, published the anti-war periodical *Par delà de la mêlée* (1916–18) and its post-First World War incarnation, *La Mêlée* (1918–20) and the Nietzscheans Florent Fels (an art critic whose anarcho-individualist philosophy was solidified following his devastating experience in combat and deployed in his review *Action: Cahiers individualists de philosophie et d'art* [1919–22]) and Marcel Sauvage (editor of *La Mêlée* [1918–20])). Although their theories vary in subtle ways, each of them sought to shatter not only Statist authority, but all systems and dogmas that compromised the uniqueness of the individual. Like Stirner, these anarcho-individualists denounced even anarcho-communism as a dangerous authoritarian system, and they instead advocated the individual's right to possess property and engage in free economic exchange. Their opposition to communitarian politics, moreover, extended beyond collectivity to include the principle of mass insurrection, for they maintained that such uprisings would inevitably be orchestrated by a handful of leaders, and therefore were every bit as authoritarian as any military dictatorship. In place of organized revolution, they envisioned a radical transformation of human conscience at the level of the individual intellect, and thus they theorized a specific way for creative autonomy to operate effectively and

Continued on P4

independently as an agent for social change. Their anarchist intellectual politics formed part of broader postwar debates on the social responsibility of the individualist artist; they were echoed, moreover, in the artistic anti-authoritarianism of Zurich and Paris Dada.

Long Beach artist Chris Elliott grew up in pre-revolutionary Iran, apartheid South Africa, and Reagan-era Orange County, California. He is a Studio Arts graduate of UC Irvine and has a Master's in Public Administration from Cal State Long Beach. In addition to making art, he has worked as an instructor and administrator at adult day programs for people with severe developmental disabilities, and as a grant writer and gallery director for arts nonprofits. Since 2003, he has been active in labor activism and political organizing. He is a regular contributor to the progressive labor news website PeoplesWorld.org and currently works as a Rehabilitation Therapist at a mental health facility.



"Razor Ribbon"

Chris Elliott

Community Rallies in Response to City Council Attack on the Right to Share Food

by Karl Scott and General Dogon

A growing coalition of Southern California organizations, including LA CAN, are working to build a California Homeless Bill of Rights (HBR) Campaign. The urgent need for the HBR became even more clear in mid-October when Los Angeles City Councilmember Tom LaBonge proposed a motion that could potentially prohibit groups from serving meals in public spaces across the city. Unfortunately this is nothing new, as these sort of public feeding bans pop up in major cities across the country in recent years.

This particular motion first came to light when a small group of residents in Hollywood began to complain about the Greater West Hollywood Food Coalition's (GWHFC) food line. The GWHFC is a completely volunteer run organization that has served hot, nutritious meals to homeless and hungry residents in the Hollywood area for over 25 years (without ever missing a meal). Rather than come up with a solution that works for everyone, Councilmember LaBonge chose to attack not only this group but the Right to Share Food across the city with his motion to restrictively legislate how food programs can operate.

Groups across the city organized immediately and mobilized at an October 16 Public Works and Gang Reduction Committee hearing to challenge residents and business owners who were present to support outdoor feeding restrictions. Those who were present in support of the Right to Share Food were able to convince the Council Committee to hold the motion until reports are produced from a number of government agencies, including the LA County Department of Public Health and LAPD.

Soon after the Committee hearing, LA CAN and other HBR endorsers organized a vigil in support of GWHFC on October 30. Over 50 supporters present at the action were able to see firsthand that many of the violations and accusations brought forward by residents were untrue. First of all, the food line exists in an industrial area that is at least 3 full city blocks in any direction from a residential area. The only "neighbors" encountered were employees of businesses in concrete buildings. Secondly, GWHFC has an extremely well organized operation that includes thorough cleaning and sanitization measures and a person keeping everyone out of the street and on the sidewalk with a flashlight. Additionally, there are other critical services provided at the site, like a mobile medical van and legal services.

The opposition continued to build and was exercised in a march on November 27, the day before Thanksgiving, when all kinds of politicians, business leaders, and volunteers come out to serve food with poor and homeless residents. About 100 people marched to call attention to the fact that these holiday programs and their "celebrity" volunteers get praised for serving poor and homeless folks turkey legs while smiling for the media—as if poor and homeless folks only eat once a year. It was therefore important to come out in support of the Homeless Bill of Rights and say to everyone that the Right to Share food must be protected 365 days a year, not just on Holidays. The march went from St. Francis Center on Washington and Hope Streets to Pershing Square. St. Francis was chosen as the starting point because the area has recently become a target of LAPD—with homeless folks regularly being harassed, receiving tickets, and having their property threatened to

Continued on P6

The following is reproduced by permission of the author from the Zine of the same name. Only minor editorial alterations have been made to reflect considerations of space, format, etc. --Black Flag Editor

Consent: A Guide to How to Have Good Consent Designed for all Ages! By Ariel Zitny

- ◇ Did you know someone does not need to say no in order to not consent?
- ◇ Did you know someone can say yes and still not consent?

Consent is complicated, because we as humans are complicated! Consent is NOT as simple as “yes means yes and no means no”—and here is why.

There is a difference between consent as an action/word and consent as a feeling/desire. To distinguish between the two, the phrase “enthusiastic consent” is sometimes used. I use the phrase “true consent” to mean the same thing. Enthusiastic consent emphasizes that the consenting person is not just consenting with words, but with spirit as well. With enthusiastic consent, there is no question that the consenting person wants what they consent to. It also requires that consent is opt-in. This means you don't have to say no! It is not about opting out, but about being a willing participant.

True consent is about respecting boundaries. To make sure your boundaries are not being crossed, ask yourself these questions:

- ◇ Does this make me feel uncomfortable?
- ◇ Could I be hurt by this?
- ◇ Do I feel safe?
- ◇ Do I feel like I can say no?

To make sure you are not crossing someone else's boundaries, ask yourself those questions from their point of view.

If you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, you could want to consent to protect yourself, not because you want to. Always discuss your fears. If you feel like you can't say no, then it is not your choice saying yes. Coercion is not consent. Consent is willing.

We also need to think about how to ask for consent. First of all: ALWAYS ASK!

Consent is not implied! Not getting a “no” is not the same as getting a “yes.”

Example:

Person 1: Wanna go out sometime?

Person 2: [uncomfortable silence]

Person 1: I'm going to take that as a yes!

Ask in a way where they can feel comfortable responding in any way. Someone might not want to say “no” to “is this OK?” but maybe would say “yes” to “do you feel uncomfortable?”—so try to ask for consent in a couple of ways.

Make sure to get consent at the time it is needed. Prior consent does not count.

If someone at any time changes their mind, let them! Don't try to convince them not to. Convincing people to change their minds is coercion, and that is not true consent.

Convincing someone to change their mind is one form of coercion, but there are many. Begging, threatening, and guilt-tripping people to do things are also coercion. Any consent received by coercion is not true consent. Asking over and over and over again until you get a “yes” is also not true consent. If you are convinced, begged, threatened, guilted, or barraged into saying yes, it is not your fault.

But what about sacrifices and compromises we make for people we love?



Certain amounts of give and take are healthy! But, consent is still required. We make sacrifices or compromises for people only when we want to, or else those actions are not safe or healthy. We should not be doing things because we feel like we have to, because we want something in return, or because we are ignoring our own needs and desires. Make sure you are giving and taking only things that do not affect your boundaries or needs.

Make sure you are giving out of goodness and love, not obligation or fear. You never want to do something you don't want to do.

And then, there is innuendo.

THE BOILING FROG: When a frog is placed in a pot of boiling water, it jumps out! But if you put a frog in room temperature water and slowly bring it to a boil, the frog will grow used to the heat, and will remain in the pot and boil alive.

Many times we are confronted with things we don't want, and we reject them. It is easy to say no if we know what we're being offered. Because of this, people will want to “warm us up” to certain situations, so we will be more likely to say yes.

Example:

Person 1: So you won't do 10... What about 1? That's nothing!

Person 2: Uh... I guess 1 would be OK...

Person 1: OK, so what about 2 then? Hardly any different!

Sometimes with this type of coercion we may agree to do something we knew we did not want to do—something we would not have agreed to had we not been warmed up. If this happens to you, it's not your fault.

If someone wants something

Continued on P7

be taken away. After rallying and a brief intro for those present and the news cameras on hand, the group made their way through downtown, gathering signatures for a petition supporting the Right to Share Food and the full Homeless Bill of Rights and chanting "We need food, everyday, don't legislate our lives away."

During one of the stops on the march, Joe Thomas, a homeless veteran, talked about the daily trials that he and others have to go through just to rest, eat, and exist. When the group arrived at Pershing Square, Ramona, a South Central resident, spoke passionately about hunger not being a crime and scolding politicians for allowing people to serve food on holidays but criminalizing anyone doing the same thing during the rest of the year.

The rally concluded with a skit that reenacted the story of Nelly, a 92 year-old woman who was pushed out of Pershing Square for serving sandwiches to homeless folks. At the same time, however, the Farmer's Market at Pershing Square continues to serve the interests of higher-income downtowners (they don't even accept EBT cards). This contradiction must be resolved, and a Homeless Bill of Rights would help to do just that.

The movement to ensure the Right to Share Food in Los Angeles is upheld grew even more in a demonstration held in Hollywood on December 14. Several hundred people marched and shared the message of protecting civil rights along Hollywood Boulevard, in an action organized by the Monday Night Mission.

As a result of the numerous local actions and related local and national press coverage, LaBonge seems to be backing off his push for a ban. We can't stop now. This motion must be stopped and we must uplift the Right to Share Food for all! Of course, even when this motion is defeated, the battle is not over. We must continue to fight for a California Homeless Bill of Rights and to protect the civil rights of ALL residents.

To get involved in the Homeless Bill of Rights Campaign, come to the LA CAN Civil Rights Committee meeting every Monday at 1:00 pm at 530 S. Main St.

This piece reprinted, with permission, from the Dec 2013-Jan 2014 issue of Community Connection, published by LA CAN (www.cangress.org). F@@ members are active in working with LA CAN for homeless rights. Contact us at faacollective@gmail.com or faacollective@riseup.net.



F@@ Joins Nationwide Effort to Free Nestora Salgado

The F@@ has joined the struggle to free Nestora Salgado, and will be working to help build the movement in LA. The following piece is adapted from materials by the Freedom Socialist Party, which helped jump-start the national campaign (contact their LA Branch at fspla@earthlink.net). --Black Flag Editor

Who is Nestora Salgado?

Nestora Salgado is a naturalized U.S. citizen who grew up in the small indigenous village of Olinalá in the state of Guerrero, Mexico. She moved to the United States in 1991 at the age of 20, working as a maid, nanny and waitress. She splits her time between Olinalá and Renton, Washington, where she lives with her husband José Luis Avila, a construction worker, her daughters, and grandchildren. Over the past four years, she made numerous trips to deliver clothing and supplies to the desperately poor residents of her hometown.

Fighting poverty and violence in Guerrero.

Guerrero has the highest murder rate in Mexico and a history of state involvement in massacres of indigenous peasants. During her trips home to Mexico, Salgado witnessed increasing poverty and the rise in violent crime and political corruption. This led her to become a community activist for the human rights of indigenous people in Guerrero and neighboring parts of Mexico. In particular, she became involved in the indigenous movement for community policing that has swept through the region during the past several years. Guerrero State Law 701 and Article 2.A of the Mexican Constitution guarantee the right of indigenous people to self-government and self-defense, including forming their own police forces.

Soon, Salgado was putting the laws into practice by organizing with others to form a community police force in Olinalá. Its officers formed patrols to defend residents against organized crime, particularly the Los Rojos gang. The gang had been terrorizing the community and operating with impunity due to the complicity of local officials, including the mayor.

The impetus for forming the community force was the murder of a local taxi cab driver who refused to pay protection money to Los Rojos. Salgado led a mobilization of village residents to drive the gang out of town and set up checkpoints to keep them from coming back. Last spring Salgado was elected "comandante" or coordinator. She has worked hard to develop the leadership of indigenous women and to empower them to stand up against domestic violence and child abuse.

Continued on P7

“Consent” continued...

from you that would compromise your boundaries, but you like them and want to please them, think of something you can enjoy that does not go against your boundaries.

Try saying, “Doing _____ would make me uncomfortable. Why don’t we do _____ instead?” You can keep your boundaries and please people.

Be honest and communicate. Relationships should be fun!

Be kind to yourself and your loved ones. You deserve it!

Ariel Zitny is a queer feminist and creative writer in Orange County, CA. She writes poetry, fiction, and nonfiction. She is dedicated in fighting against abuse and inequality. Find her on Facebook at facebook.com/ArielZitny.



F@@ Joins Nationwide Effort to Free Nestora Salgado continued...

Initially, Salgado was able to obtain the support of Angel Aguirre, the governor of Guerrero, who promised in writing to provide the force with uniforms, small arms, training and other support. The impact of the community policing, which relied on traditional means of accountability and social control, was dramatic—a 90% drop in the crime rate and no murders during the 10 months that it was in operation. In the two months since the governor shut down community police, crime has increased and there were four killings, despite the presence of over a thousand marines and soldiers as well as state and federal police. Government forces harass community organizers, sometimes threatening to kill them, while protecting criminal activity.

Nestora Salgado’s abduction and arrest.

The official pretext for seizing her on August 21, 2013, was the arrest of several teenage girls for dealing drugs and the arrest of the local sheriff, Armando Patrón Jiménez, for tampering with evidence at the crime scene of a double assassination where he attempted to walk off with a cow, the property of the deceased. She is falsely charged with kidnapping both the sheriff and the girls.

At a meeting five days before her arrest between the mayor and Salgado, she refused to let the sheriff, a political crony of the mayor, go free without trial by a peoples’ court. A few days later, she found herself transported by private plane to a maximum security prison 2000 miles from Olinalá. The arrest appears to be in retaliation for a press release Salgado issued that outlined the mayor’s and other government figures’ ties to drug trafficking.

Prosecuting indigenous leaders like Salgado and suppressing autonomous community police forces also serves a larger purpose—silencing vocal opposition by indigenous communities to foreign

mining companies that have large contracts to extract mineral wealth from the mountains of Guerrero.

Political persecution and mistreatment in jail.

Salgado was seized without an arrest warrant by federal soldiers at a checkpoint while driving home. She had been harassed with death threats by marines for several days prior to her arrest. Since the day after her arrest, Nestora Salgado has been incarcerated in the high security detention center of El Rincon, in Tepic, Nayarit, several days travel from Olinalá. There is no basis for the government’s claim that such extreme measures are warranted because Salgado—a grandmother and well-respected citizen with no criminal record—is a danger to society. Furthermore, kidnapping is not a federal crime in Mexico and those accused are normally held in local jails.

Isolating Salgado from her supporters and family by transporting her so far away, without legal justification, is evidence that she is a political prisoner. Efforts to organize support in Olinalá for Salgado’s release and the revival of community policing are being suppressed by death threats and reprisals; Salgado’s advocates are being cut-off from public assistance, especially needed since a severe storm in mid-October.

For weeks, Salgado was held incommunicado. She was not allowed to see her attorney or family members, who had traveled the long distance to get to the penitentiary. She was only allowed a lawyer after the deadline had passed to petition for release while awaiting trial. Only one of her daughters and a sister has been able to visit her. This persecution is all for performing her lawful duties as the coordinator of the community police force.

Several years ago, Salgado was injured in a car accident that left her temporarily paralyzed from the neck down. Through extensive physical therapy, she was able to regain 90% of her functioning but is still unable to work. To manage severe neuropathy in her hands and feet, she relies on pain medication and frequent exercise. In prison, she has been denied both, worsening her physical and mental condition. Now she is being threatened with solitary confinement.

The recent assassination of another strong woman activist in Guerrero, Rocío Mesino Mesino, is a reminder that Salgado’s life is in jeopardy without close public scrutiny and strong support in Mexico and the United States.

Please sign the petition to free Nestora at www.tinyurl.com/nestora.

For more information about how to get involved in building this movement in LA, contact the Free Association of Anarchists (F@@) at faacollective@riseup.net.





"Time and Memory" by Chris Elliott

Jackson Mac Low (1922-2004) was an anarchist-pacifist activist, educator, composer, poet, performance artist, and playwright who authored 26 books. In his "Statement," written in 1965, Mac Low briefly outlines some of his ideas on anarchism. Ammon Hennacy (1893-1970), whom Mac Low mentions below, was a Christian anarchist-pacifist and Wobbly, who was also Mac Low's comrade in the anti-war and anti-nuclear movements. --Black Flag editor.

"Statement" by Jackson Mac Low

An "anarchist" does not believe, as some wrongly have put it, in social chaos. He believes in a state of society wherein there is no frozen power structure, where all persons may make significant initiatory choices in regard to matters affecting their own lives. In such a society coercion is at a minimum & lethal violence practically non-existent. Certainly, there will still be situations where coercion may have to be exercised to prevent something worse, but, as Ammon Hennacy has demonstrated in life, even maniacs with knives may be sometimes pacified without violent coercion. A "pacifist" believes that better methods than violence may almost always be found to solve social difficulties & resolve differences between individuals & groups. While not all anarchists are pacifists even now, & many pacifists are not anarchists, I think all agree in regarding the individual person as being infinitely precious & as being capable of cooperating with others for the good of all. Let us add to these attitudes that of the Taoist, Zen Buddhist, or Kegon Buddhist, wherein the elementary actions of the world itself & of "all sentient beings" are regarded as being on a level with those of human beings in the narrower sense. One comes to situation wherein "even plants have rights" (one doesn't chop down a tree unless there's a damn good reason to). How better to embody such ideas in microcosm than to create works where both other human beings & their environments & the world "in general" (as represented by such objectively hazardous means as random digits) are all able to act within the general framework set of "rules" given by the poet, "the maker of plots or fables," as Aristotle insists-the poet is pre-eminently the maker of the plot, the framework-not necessarily of everything that takes place within that framework! The poet creates a situation wherein he invites other persons & the world in general to be co-creators with him! He does not wish to be a dictator but a loyal co-initiator of action within the free society of equals which he hopes his work will help to bring about.

That such works themselves may lead to new discoveries about the nature of the world & of man I have no doubt. I have learned, for instance, that it is often very difficult to tell, in many cases, what is "chance" & what is "cause." There are kinds of inner & hidden causation that are very difficult to distinguish, on the one hand, from "chance" or "coincidence," & on the other, from "synchronicity": "meaningful acausal interconnection." Also, absolutely unique situations may arise during performances of such works, & the experiences of those participating in them (whether as performers, audience or both) cannot help but be of new aesthetic (experiential) meanings. That is, not only do the works embody & express certain metaphysical, ethical, & political meanings, but they also bring into being new aesthetic meanings.

Excerpted from Poetics of the New American Poetry, edited by Donald Allen and Warren Tallman (New York: Grove, 1973)

Decolonization and Liberation

By Michael Novick, Anti-Racist Action L.A./People Against Racist terror

The resistance to European colonialism in Africa, Asia, and the Americas has a history over 500 years in length. Resistance to capitalism stretches back two centuries. The cataclysmic human and environmental costs of the prevailing economic and political order are now exceedingly clear. So we have to ask ourselves, why does capitalist imperialism still dominate this country and the world?

What lessons can we learn from previous partial victories that were undermined and overcome by the system, as well as from previous efforts at revolutionary social transformation and human liberation that failed? How can we apply those lessons in practice to try to advance the struggle in a fundamental way that shifts the balance of forces between the state, the corporations and the elite on the one hand, and the insurgencies and resistance of exploited and oppressed peoples on the other? How can we open a path towards an egalitarian, ecological human society that respects diversity, and liberates our creativity and capacity for love and pleasure, before the current system carries out any further genocide and does irreversible damage to the planetary ecosystem? To answer these questions and unleash the tactical ingenuity of hundreds of millions of people, we need to understand the actual bases of the state, the economic system, and its grip on our thinking and practice.

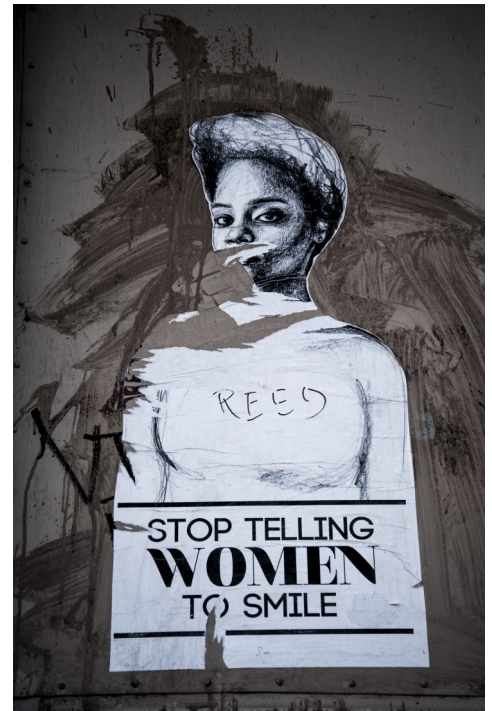
Although people commonly talk about the nation state, the true paradigm of the state has always been the empire, not the nation. States have always been and still are built for and through conquest and subjugation of land and people. A look at the history of any of the European states will demonstrate the truth of that, but it's also true of the pre-Columbian

That is not 'Hello' and you know it.



By Nicole Capobianco

Nicole Capobianco is a photographer, designer, theorist, and mixed media artist. Born and raised in Rhode Island, she currently lives and works in New York City. Much of her photography work is in the genre she calls 'Civil Imagination,' in which photography can be understood as a collaboration between participants, rather than as a process that revolves around photograph-as-product. Her most recent work, *This Is Not Hello*, uses street art applied by women to tell the story of street harassment, and to bridge the connection between public space and the female body. She is currently working as a freelancer in photography, graphic design, web design, and videography.



Continued on P10



Nicole Capobianco



Decolonization and Liberation continued...

societies that had state formations in the Americas, as well as pre-capitalist regimes in Africa and Asia before European penetration and conquest. The states created by imperial mapmaking crisscross existing nations.

Similarly, the first form of capital was private ownership of land, a social relationship between owner, land, and other people. Modern European ruling classes and the empire-states they built were based on the conquest and privatization of communally held land and the matriarchal societies that lived on them within Europe itself. The basis of the state and the economic system is the planting of flags and the imposition of grids, property lines and maps on the fluid reality of human societies and continental terrain. That process enabled the driving of people from the land, transforming them into proletarians only able to survive by selling their labor power. This was compounded by so-called “primitive” or primary accumulation, the looting of colonized people and their land, which is still on-going.

The ability of the resulting states to conquer additional territories and people, using the time-tested strategies of divide and rule, building more extensive empires, also created the basis for winning the allegiance of substantial sectors of the populations of the imperial countries, who actively engaged in settler colonialism. Various forms of identification with the empire, through mechanisms such as racial and national privilege, neo-colonial elitism, and the incorporation of pre-existing systems of hierarchy and domination—such as gender—into capitalism, account for the longevity of the system, along with its willingness to use overwhelming brutal force to conquer and control colonies.

But the failure of anti-authoritarian and anti-capitalist forces to recognize the system for what it is—a constant, institutionalized state of war—also sustains the system. We talk of “class war” without having a deep understanding that our enemy is waging class and colonial war every minute, every day. We try to identify allies and classes without seeing that capital in land is an essential form of capitalism. Participating in building a society based on conquered land and the private ownership of that land impacts not only class consciousness but actual class realities and identification and goes a long way toward explaining why the US is the world bastion of reaction. Settler colonialism explains why the political right understands that the state does not have a monopoly on the use of force, but the left fails to recognize this. It also exposes the material basis of white supremacy and white privilege that must be overcome. Imperialism offers privileges to control people, our thinking and our practice. What you have by privilege is not yours by right and not a road to freedom.

We have an implacable enemy who has and will stop at nothing to maintain its rule, and only war will end it. Just as colonialism is central to this system, decolonization is central to dismantling it. Once we see those central strategic realities, then a vast array of tactical and organizational possibilities opens up. The Empire is fractal or holographic in nature—every part of it is imbued with the whole. We can organize in the workplace or the community, in the city, suburbs or rural areas, around issues of liberation from the oppressive binary gender system or educational or environmental justice, around the human right to housing or health care. Just remember, there are no citizens in an empire.

Continued on P11

there will be enough taxable surplus left over to finance social welfare” (see his book *Against Capitalism* for the quote in context as well as for a deep analysis of capitalism and its alternatives).

Schweickart sums up the negative “side effects” of capitalism pretty succinctly: wars, crises (as a result of the well-known “boom and bust cycle”), unemployment, pollution, resource depletion, poverty, and extreme inequalities. There isn't space here to convince the skeptical reader that these are the necessary consequences of the capitalist system, but there's no need to, since the standard references, including Schweickart's, make the case more than adequately (email faacollective@riseup.net if you'd like further reading).

Nicole Lapointe



And lest you think we're overly focused on capitalism, and not the more generalized problem of authoritarianism/statism, remember that it is the state that, through the authoritarian exercise of force (police, military, intelligence, surveillance), maintains the existence of the entire socio-political-economic system (see the article “Capitalism Requires Government” by political science professor Douglas J. Amy—<http://www.governmentisgood.com/articles.php?aid=13>—if you don't believe it).

It is worthwhile to point out that Schweickart's critiques are not even very controversial these days, at least not in the academy (e.g., the above-cited Dr. Amy reaches approximately the same conclusions). In fact, that the current political-economic system inherently pollutes, exploits, depletes, and so on is so well-known that very few serious thinkers even bother denying it anymore. Instead, today's defenders of the status quo like to trot out the classic “There Is No Alternative” (TINA) defense. In other words, as unsustainable (heck, *unbearable*) as capitalism may be, it's simply the best option out of a smorgasbord of even worse possibilities—much like Churchill's famous quip that “democracy is the worst form of government, except for all those other forms.”

Fortunately for us anarchists, the TINA claim is patently and demonstrably false. And it is not only false in the sense that famous historical and contemporary examples—the Paris Commune, Catalonia during the Spanish Revolution, the Ukraine during the Russian Revolution and subsequent civil war, Zapatista-liberated regions of Chiapas, countless indigenous groupings like those listed in Graeber's *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology*—attest to the real-world feasibility of anarchist/anarchistic practices. It is also false in the wake of a growing body of evidence culled from an enormous range of fields, including psychology, sociology, anthropology, cognitive science, cybernetics, political science, game theory, evolutionary biology, and economics, just to name a few, that seems to be converging around a small number of deep anti-authoritarian truths. Or to put it another way, evidence from a wide range of disciplines, when taken as a cumulative whole, seems to point to what anarchists have known all along: namely, that human health, security, well-being, and happiness—both individual and collective—will best be pursued in a society organized along non-hierarchical, anti-authoritarian, libertarian-communal lines.

The word “cumulative” is critical here. The validity of anarchist/anti-authoritarian thought cannot be demonstrated by formal logic, like a mathematical proof. It cannot be derived by simple deductive or inductive reasoning the way many fundamental physical laws, like Newton's Law of Gravity, are simply and elegantly formulated. Rather, it *emerges* as the only possible way of understanding a vast array of data taken *cumulatively*.

Arguing in this way is not without precedent. Evolutionary theory and anthropogenic climate change are two widely-accepted scientific theories that similarly are buttressed by cumulative arguments made by assembling impressive collections of data from disparate sources. Any single data point, like the panda's thumb made famous by Stephen Jay Gould, is not sufficient to *prove* evolutionary theory. In fact, it's considered philosophical orthodoxy today that *no* single piece of evidence could ever prove evolution or any other scientific theory. But all the bodies of evidence taken together—biogeography, the fossil record, homologous structures, analogous structures, embryology, and molecular biology—just wouldn't fit with any other explanation (it might be helpful to remind ourselves here that the scientific meaning of “theory” is “a model supported by a body of empirical evidence,” not simply a “guess” or “conjecture,” as the word means in everyday English). A parallel train of reasoning can be constructed for the the thesis that human activities are to blame for observed patterns of climate change.

We must act with an understanding that we confront an enemy with whom we have an irreconcilable contradiction, and yet one that has its claws inside our minds and hearts. The class struggle takes place within us and within classes as well as between them. That makes self-critical analysis of our weaknesses and failures, using our strengths to overcome them, absolutely essential, so that masses of people will see the prospects and possibilities of victory. We have to study the class enemy as deeply and rigorously as it studies us. We have to determine its weaknesses and disabilities, and our own. In their case, we seek to magnify and exploit those weaknesses. In our own case we seek to purge or overcome the weaknesses through constructive criticism and self-criticism. Only in this way can we weaken the power and grasp of the Empire and strengthen the powers of resistance and self-determination. As we break free, take direct action to build self-determination and meet human needs, we simultaneously increase people's power and decrease the power and endurance of our enemy.

If you are interested in discussing these ideas further, check out "Turning the Tide" at www.antiracist.org or contact antiracistaction_la@yahoo.com

How would you explain anarchism to someone who's never heard anything but the mainstream slander?

How would you sum up the anarchist philosophy/worldview/attitude/culture in the fewest words possible?

What's the best definition of anarchism you can come up with?

How would you explain anarchism to a 7-year-old? To your grandma?

We want your answers in 500 words or less.

Send in your best 500-words-or-less definition/explanation of anarchism to be eligible. Top prize winner gets a \$25 gift-card from AK Press. Two runners-up will receive \$10 gift-cards. All responses will be published in the Spring 2014 issue of Black Flag.

Also feel free to send quips and quotations from famous anarchists or from rarely-read materials (but these won't be eligible for a prize)—we want it all!

Multiple submissions welcomed.

Email omarhussain@gmail.com or catullus1984@riseup.net to submit or for more information.

Note: F@ members are not eligible for prizes.

Theanarchistassociation.wordpress.com

**Published by The Free
Association of Anarchists**

*If you are hungry, I will offer food.
If you are thirsty, I will offer water.
If you are cold, I will offer warmth.
If you are in need, ask and I will give.
If you are in trouble, ask and I will help.*



*I do not do these things in the hopes of being rewarded.
I do not do these things out of fear of punishment.
I do these things because I know them to be right.
I set my own standards and I alone enforce them.
I am an Anarchist*

The Coming Anarchist Consensus continued...

In a similar vein, it is impossible to *prove*, in a strict sense, the validity of anarchist thought, or the superiority of anarchist models of organizing for achieving the health, wealth, and happiness of the global human family. In fact, any "macro" theory of human societies (which anarchism is, at least partly) must by nature be too complex to be amenable to simple proof. However, it is our contention that a cumulative argument, analogous to that for evolution or climate change, can be made for the anarchist perspective. Indeed, it is our contention that this argument is just as sound and compelling as any that has been made in the more traditionally "respectable" sciences. This emerging cumulative case is what we mean by a coming "consensus" surrounding anarchism.

If we haven't lost you, we will continue this line of reasoning in Part 2, which will appear in our Spring 2014 "What is Anarchism?" special issue. We will sketch out some of the rudimentary outlines of the cumulative argument for anarchism, pointing out particular "data points" that are especially relevant. We will also show how this line of thought helps clarify and refine any discussion of the definition(s) of anarchism(s). And hopefully we will help remind you, or, if necessary, further convince you, that we anarchists, in all our diverse and opinionated glory, are on the right side of history.

In the meantime, if you'd like to discuss this, or any other, topic, email us at faacollective@riseup.net or catullus1984@riseup.net.

—Your Humble Black Flag Editors.